canals that cross the desert going to Los Angeles. We were able to take water out of those, and we did provide the pump stations and the loading stations and maybe the Quartermaster Corps transported the water, but the Engineers' job is to provide water for the fighting forces.

Q: So then, from the desert, did you go to Camp Cooke?

A: At Camp Cooke it was the 6th Armored Division. Then they formed an armored corps, the 2d Armored Corps. And a part of the Engineer effort in an armored corps was an Engineer group, which is made up of three battalions and a bridge company, and I was placed in charge of getting raw recruits, again, and training this Engineer group. I had three battalions and the Engineer company and a headquarters company, and we moved to Camp Cooke, which, again, was a brand new camp, and we had to do all that business of getting ready for occupancy.

Q: In April 1943 you became commander of the 1138th Engineer Combat Group at Camp Cooke.

A: That's it, 1138th. Again, as for several years, my main job was training new recruits or new draftees and officers. When I formed the group I had one regular Army officer. All the rest were ROTC officers who were sent in, and they had to learn their jobs, too, with court martial authority and that sort of thing. A broad experience for them and also for me. But, in those days, and in that age group, there was an awful lot of ambition and dedication, and it was beautifully done. You've got to remember that when we started preparing for World War II there were only 25,000 Regular Army officers including medics. And those 25,000 were the core that was to take the reserve officers, and people who graduated from officer training schools, and turn them into some sort of an Army. That's why it was experience. It was teaching the whole darn time.

Q: Well, I guess your teaching days ended about November '43 when you were transferred to Headquarters, European theater, and your first duty there was as chief of the Troops Section. Can you tell us something about those days? What your

duties were, how long you were in this position, and so forth.

A: Well, General [Jacob L.] Devers, as you know, was head of the Armored Force of the United States, and he was going over to participate in or to see the invasion of Italy from Sicily, and I said, "They surely must need an engineer officer over there somewhere." And sure enough, I got orders to go to Europe. I had been sent back from Camp Cooke to go back to Fort Belvoir to be put through a course of anti-tank defense, and while there I got orders to go to Europe, so I had to rush back to California, gather my family, drive across the country, drop them in Grafton--I was going to war right away--and I went to Washington and waited 30 days to get over there! And my assignment was going to be chief of staff of a group of amphibious brigades, the two brigades that invaded Utah and Omaha beaches. They were organized with a Superior Command. I was to be chief of staff of that Superior Command. But, when I went through London, General [Daniel] Noce, who was G-4, said he had a nice oak desk for me in headquarters, and that's the last I saw of fighting in World War II. And the main job I had at that time was the placement of troops in England that were being sent from the United States.

Q: What was your impression of General Noce?

A: Oh, what a guy! He knew his job. He was a good G-4. At that time, you see, General Devers was in command in England.

Q: But you and Noce got along well, I take it?

A: Oh, yes. Yes, we'd known each other before. One day he came to me and he said, "Joe, upstairs in this other building there's a bunch of people from the movies and the theatre and that sort of background, trying to put together a psychological warfare organization." He said, "There's nobody up there with any military experience. You go up there and you get 'em organized and develop the tables of organization and the tables of equipment, and then you're going back to the states to organize two Psychological Warfare battalions." So it took two or three days, and they finally saw that the military had to have something to do with

their activities. It was fascinating because what we were after were people who spoke languages so that we could drop 'em in Czechoslovakia and other countries and also in the battlefield. Another activity that they were supposed to do had to do with the interviewing of prisoners and the taping of their questions and answers. It was a very broad information-gathering and influence-peddling organization, so General Devers gave me a letter. Unfortunately I don't have it anymore because I turned it over to G-4 of the Army when I got back there, that said, "Colonel Potter is back here on the top priority mission of the theater. Give him all the help he needs. Et cetera."

Q: This is when you became executive of the propaganda branch--is that what it was called?

A: Yeah, but that was under Devers' organization, you see, and my superior was a brigadier general who was, I think, a brother-in-law of General [George C.] Marshall, Brigadier General Tristam Tupper. Nice guy. Anyhow, I went back and this was, I think, in November, and flew back via Marrakesh and the west coast of Africa and across to Brazil and up that way. Quite an experience also. And went in to see the Army G-4 and I said, "Here's what we want," and handed him General Devers' letter. The material and equipment we wanted was, in some cases, super secret, and he said, "How the hell did you find out about this?" And I said, "I don't even know what it is, but here's the name of it, and we want 16 of 'em!" This battalion will have 16 of them, and other things that we needed were not yet out for distribution. There was one piece of equipment that you put a message on it that might be a page long, and it came out more or less as a dot. It was extremely rapid, and all that came out was a dot, and you had to have another machine that made that dot into the long message again. And, while they existed they were always kept in safes and the safes were in short supply. But, anyhow, the base for forming such an organization was the OSS. [Office of Strategic Services], and they were the place where I was supposed to get these multilingual people, and they took me under their wing right away. General [William J.] Donovan was in charge. I never met him, by the way. The other organization that was supposed to give me a lot of help was OWI

[Office of War Information], and the playwright Robert Sherwood was in charge of OWI. I went to see him, and when he unfolded in his chair he almost hit the ceiling. He was a very tall, thin fellow. And I got no help from them whatsoever. None at all. They had nobody to spare, so I continued to work very closely with the OSS, and we got our battalions organized. We got them sent for training, we got the equipment, and I returned to Europe.

In forming the psychological warfare battalions and getting their equipment, I received enormous help, of course, from the War Department, which furnished the equipment, some of which was highly classified. I've explained what their job was going to be, and we got very competent people, multilingual where it was necessary, and people attuned to that kind of operation. And you can see, I think, that people from the creative industry of our country were the kind of people who could project their thoughts, who were not stultified by regulations and all that sort of thing. They were the proper people to be able to visualize what psychological warfare was. And I received a great deal of help. Almost all the help I got was from OSS, and I made some dear friends in that organization. I didn't receive much help from OWI, and as a result of that, and I believe because OWI felt they were going to lose their grip on this thing, I was relieved of that duty and sent back to England. During that time General Devers had left to handle the African invasion, and General [Dwight D.] Eisenhower had moved in. There was a brand new chief of psychological warfare, and he and I did not get along. We didn't get along for a half hour and that's all it took.

Q: Do you recall his name?

A: No, I don't. However, I didn't want to stay on anymore, except for one thing, and that is the OSS guys in my battalion sort of expected that I was the father figure, and when they got to Glasgow and I wasn't there, being nonmilitary people in the first place, they sent a delegation down to London to find out where the hell I was and why wasn't I up there meeting them. Among the things that they later accomplished was that they took over Radio

Luxembourg when they got there, and they used it as a great propaganda machine. One of the really top-drawer guys in the organization, Pat Dolan, with no military background at all, was the fellow who talked the Germans into surrendering at Cherbourg, using big bullhorns. He just talked them into surrendering! There's an article in one Saturday Evening Post that describes his activities in energizing that surrender of the German troops at Cherbourg. It was very interesting to me, later on, that as we gradually overran parts of France it became necessary to take care of the civilian population. And there was an inkling at me one time whether or not I would like to head up the OWI organization that was sort of supervising the occupied areas of France that we'd freed from the Germans. I decided that I didn't want that kind of job and was able to argue General [James A.] Stratton into not releasing me. When I disengaged from psychological warfare, I was assigned to the G-4 section under General Stratton.

Q: You were the chief of the Planning Branch of the G-4 section?

A: Yes.

Q: Could you tell us what your duties were then?

A: Well, the reason I was assigned there was that Brigadier General [William] Whipple, or then Colonel Whipple, who had filled that job, was elevated to the next higher headquarters, to General Eisenhower's headquarters, where he had the same sort of job for the multinational activity. But the job of the Planning Division was to prepare the logistics plan for the invasion, and that involved moving troops, supplying troops, making sure that their movements were coordinated, working with the commanders of the divisions and corps and armies, and seeing that everything worked in moving the troops down to the coast, getting them on the ships and over to France. And it was organized in sort of a sequential activity. They were moved first to a martialing area, an area where they were supposed to be fitted out in a certain way, and then to another advanced area where they received further equipment and did other things. For instance, one of the last things they did was to

waterproof vehicles so that they could go off landing craft and land in a few feet of water and still be an active vehicle--that was a very important activity.

One of our problems, of course, was the language barrier, and that may sound peculiar, working with the British. The British had prepared all the manuals, and one of them that was hard to understand, though it was very thin. It was POMSSV--Preparation for Overseas Movement, Short Sea Voyage, the short sea voyage being from England to France. But, it described in detail what should be done. But as little examples of the problems, a truck is a lorry in England, gasoline is petrol, the hood of a car is a bonnet, I think, or is that the trunk, I don't know, one or the other. So, I got a little perturbed because we were getting so many questions, so I prepared a long chart, about a yard long, that on the side had the individual, the squad, the platoon, the company, the battalion, the brigade, the division, and the corps, and up here, time frames. I prepared these things, which explain in a chart form how logistically we were going to invade France. I printed 10,000 of 'em, I guess. I didn't keep a copy, unfortunately. I wish I had.

One day I even went up to see General [George S.] Patton with my stack of forms to pass out to his people, and had breakfast with him. I'd barely known him as a colonel at Fort Myer when I was at Fort Belvoir. During our days at Camp Chaffee my wife and I got to know his daughters very well because we were there together, and this is really the first time I ever sat down with him, at breakfast, or intimately. And I described my form and what it was used for, and how they should be passed out to the company commanders and platoon commanders and battalion commanders and so on. And he was interested and listened very politely, but during the course of it, I was sitting at this end of the table and he was up at the head of the table and there were seven or eight other people there. He looked up and in his high, squeaky voice, said, "You son of a bitch! Get down from that table, and get outta here!" His dog had gotten up. [laughter] Scared me out of my--I didn't know if I was the son of the bitch or not, you see! In London, I had a staff and planning department and we prepared

all the logistical plans for the invasion. We'd developed what we'd do after we got into France, how we'd establish our big depots of the Ordnance, the Quartermaster and the rest of them, and hospitals and so on, and I visited the places where the troops were behind barbed wire ready to load on the ships, I had general supervision under General Stratton and General [John C.H.] Lee, of course, of the operation of the mechanism for getting over there.

Q: Let me ask you, did you feel competent as an engineer officer, planning all these logistics exercises and operations? Did you feel that you had come adequately prepared to plan what must've been an enormously complicated movement of troops and equipment?

A: Yes, but then, you come right back to the exercise of command by the commanders of the troops. They knew what they had to do, they understood thoroughly that they had to be well supplied. We had top-drawer officers in charge of the Quartermaster and Ordnance departments and they worked with their opposites in the tactical units. The Ordnance officer, for instance, worked with his Corps Ordnance officers and they jointly developed what was needed and the level of supply and that sort of thing. And it was up to the planning department then to prepare for the getting, the storage, the movement of massive amounts of supplies and equipment. It was enormously complex, and was only possible because you had planning sections in all of the services, but they had to be fitted together, so that the railroad wasn't always full of Ordnance and then always full of Quartermaster. It had to be a supply system that got to the users all of the supplies of various categories that they needed.

Q: Did you have officers from the various technical services in your section?

A: I had quite a small section, and we were all general staff--most of them civilians. I mean, ex-civilians. One of the interesting things that we had to plan and supervise was a British-American operation that was to take place when the Germans started to pull out of Norway. Its name was something like "Starlight," and we had an organization

going up in Scotland that was supposed to move over there when and if the Germans pulled out. The system did work, and we had an enormous amount of help, of course, from the British who had had the same types of problems because they'd been fighting the war in France before they pulled back from France. They knew their business.

Q: After you were chief of the Planning Branch, G-4, you became chief of the Plans and Operations Branch, G-4. Is that just a change in name, or was it more than that?

A: No, when we got over to France Jimmy Stratton said, "Hell, you prepared the plans, now it's your responsibility to see that they work."

Q: I see.

A: And they didn't in many cases.

Q: We're going to get to that in a moment. I'd like to ask you a few questions that really go back to when the United States was just setting up logistics operations in the European theater, and I'd like to get your reactions to the questions. Was there a problem emanating from the War Department reorganization of March 1942, which placed the chiefs of services, the Adjutant General, and the special staffs sections having to do with the entire Army in the SOS? Do you recall anything about that?

A: No, really, I don't. I probably was cognizant of it at the time, but that's the way it was set up. If you read those green volumes, Logistical Support of the Armies, you'll see that there was a considerable amount of in-fighting. I mean, there was a problem in melding the various organizations that had existed before Eisenhower and bringing them into a joint command. I delved into that quite a bit, because while I was peripheral, it involved us because orders would come out changing reporting channels and methods of operation. And finally, it ended up, of course, with General Lee insisting and getting complete authority for the logistical operations, the SOS operations.

Q: Do you recall any problems with the establishment

of the SOS, the Services of Supply, in the European theater ahead of the bulk of the field and air forces and before the designation of the theater commander?

A: No. We knew our job, we knew what was expected of us. Whatever machinations took place at higher headquarters did not impinge upon the planning activity too much.

Q: The question about General Lee, and I want to talk about General Lee a bit more later on, but do you recall whether General Lee was particularly desirous of remaining free from either the command of [Bernard L.] Montgomery or [Omar N.] Bradley, and could you explain, to what extent you may know, of Lee's relationship to General Brehon Somervell?

A: The main thing that stuck in my mind is that General Lee's title was deputy theater commander, among other things, and I think that was resented by some of the tactical people, but he had the prime responsibility for logistical support and he did occupy a very important position as deputy theater commander. I really don't know whether there was an exercise of that authority except as a staff officer. He was an avid traveller. He visited all kinds of units and if he saw somebody without their name tags he was liable to be busted on the spot. Had his own train and traveled with a complete staff.

Q: At the end of August 1944, you had a meeting with Generals Bradley, Lee, and [Robert W.] Crawford and Colonel Whipple to discuss moving four more divisions to Europe, and evidently the result of that meeting was that the group felt that there were some logistical obstacles to moving four divisions to Europe.

A: You must remember that in moving people from England over, it was done by ship, and ships really don't know any nationality. They were under one movement control organization and were allocated for certain purposes. I didn't get into that.

Q: Okay, and I understand you may not have any recollection of this, but I'd like to ask it of

you, and if you do, fine. Talking about SHAEF now, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force. On 1 September it assumed operational control of all forces, this is 1 September '44, bringing the 12th Army Group under its direct control and placing the Communications Zone directly under the command of General Eisenhower's theater commander. The Communications Zone thereby attained the position at least coordinate with the 12th Army Group. Unfortunately, according to one author, the effect of this development was to perpetuate the friction between the Communications Zone and the field forces, which had developed over General Lee's position in the United Kingdom, for Lee's headquarters continued to exercise some of the independence and authority of a theater headquarters by virtue of the presence there of a theater's general and special staff divisions. In short, do you have any recollection of examples of this friction between Lee's headquarters and the operating commanders or anything of that sort?

A: No, I know that the feeling existed, but I don't have any examples. It was above my level of interest even.

Q: Okay. Well, let's go back to D-Day and the days just after D-Day. What's your recollection of the logistical problems after D-Day? How severe were they? What were the major logistical problems that you remember coming across?

A: I don't think that there were any logistical problems, as far as the first few or several days after the invasion. I mean that was intimate soldier-to-soldier contact, and I really don't remember any problems as far as that time was concerned, but problems were developing, and as you know General Bradley's army was the invasion army.

Q: It was the 12th Army.

A: Eddie [Edward] Plank--General Plank--was made advance section commander of Com Z, and his relationship to the 12th Army Group was as supply officer for the 12th Army Group. He did relate to us intimately and regularly, but the 12th Army Group felt that he was their supply officer, he was responsible for the procurement, the storage, and

the issuance. We delivered supplies to France. They came under his control, and they were stored by him in various places beyond the beach areas. And as you remember, the beach areas remained tactically important for a long time because they were not able to get through the hedgerows, and they didn't advance as fast as they could, and they had terrific fighting at St. Lo and other places, Avranches and so on--this did take a long time.

Our problem, early in the game, became unloading. Ships were manifested. What was on the ships was known. And this caused a situation since the 12th Army Group insisted on their control. Naturally, they wanted their supplies, and this developed into a habit as time passed. Frequently, and even later on, the manifest being available and the ship number being available and a certain supply that they wanted right away being known, they were unloaded, and the rest of that ship would be unloaded pro forma later on. But sometimes some of the stuff was never unloaded for weeks and more. And, I'm not saying that enormous quantities--a million tons were eventually unloaded, something like that, my figure may be way off--but, they were stored in certain areas beyond the beaches, but still under the control of 12th Army Group, and Com Z was never able to get in there and establish systems, Ordnance, Signal Corps, etc.

As a result of that, when the rear boundary was established we found ourselves in control of enormous amounts of supplies without any inventory, without any location plans; nothing had been given to us. Now when I say nothing, that may be a slight exaggeration. It may have been that some of the services did relate to the services in 12th Army Group and there was some knowledge, but it was a plague to us from then on out, and as a result of that we became victims of the same policy that had been established. If the Army wanted six-inch shells, and our manifest showed that a certain ship had six-inch shells, we would unload those six-inch shells and to hell with the remainder of the cargo of that ship! And as a result of that we found ourselves, at one time, with over 200 ships anchored out there, not unloaded and needed back in the United States to bring other supplies over. And there were very intense conversations with visitors from the United States on this. We were plagued all during the time I was there with the

inability to devote the time to find out what these supplies were on the beach. It would be interesting for you to talk to General Plank about this. His opinion may be different.

Q: So, there was no attempt to load ships with certain classes of supplies, say, priority supplies, ammunition, you know, and then unloading these ships first, the manifest would be of all kinds of supplies?

A: Whatever was loaded, and I don't know anything about how things were loaded, but there may have been unit supplies. By that I mean units of certain things that made a complete package for the supply of a division for one day or something like that. I remember one time we were highly pressured because there were not enough eight-inch shells in France. A need for them suddenly arose, and we had to go back to the U.S. and get a shipload of eight-inch shells to come over, which, I think, went into Le Havre and was sunk and was unloaded by divers to lighters rather than at just to a dock.

Q: Did SHAEF G-4 help or hinder your operations? And, did they interfere too much with operations in general?

A: No. You see, SHAEF, I think it was General Crawford, wasn't it, he had to deal both with the British and with us. He had a broader spectrum than we had. No. General Whipple was up there, and he knew our organization and I would say that more often than not we received help, and he was sufficiently knowledgeable of how we worked, because he'd been there before, that he didn't come to us in a critical way. He came to us in a way, "How can we change what we've done in the past, et cetera?"

Q: Were there any supplies that became particularly acute in terms of shortage?

A: Well, I told you about the eight-inch shells. POL pipe, pumps, and equipment. We even loaded a ship with nothing but POL pipeline out of England, and I think it came to Antwerp where we had another problem later.

Q: Did the failure to take Antwerp earlier than what

we did affect logistics operations to any great extent?

A: We were always short in port capacity. It took us a long time to clear the port of Cherbourg. The Germans sunk ship on ship on top of ship, so when you'd removed one you had one underneath it. It took a long time to make those quays available for unloading, and I personally went up there from Paris, and with the plans for the improvement of the port of Cherbourg and signed them there with a colonel who was in command of the operation of that port. And I think I made a report at one time that they weren't unloading the priority things before the nonessential things, you know.

Q: Was that Colonel Sibley, by any chance?

A: No. An old-time colonel of the Corps.

Q: Where were you physically located while working on the Com Z G-4?

A: Oh, I fought a very hard war. I was in the Georges Cinq Hotel in Paris.

Q: The criticism's been made that the Com Z moved to Paris too quickly, that in some way the move to Paris hindered communications with operating elements. Do you recall anything about that dispute?

A: Well, let me broad brush the picture. We were strangled by the inability of the armies to break loose from the beachhead. During that time even before the rear boundary was established, we were operating with the situation that existed at Omaha and Utah, plus what we were able to get out of Cherbourg, and that involved improving the railroads, and French railroads aren't the same as American railroads. So we were strangled by port capacity and were always looking for capabilities to expand that capacity, and oh, I was sent to assess St. Malo. We thought we could get St. Malo, and we heard that the Germans were about to be driven out. I went barrelling out from--at that time we had a temporary headquarters behind the beach, an encampment, all Com Z was over there. I barrelled down past Avranches and across and up to

St. Malo and found the Germans were not in any way willing to give that port up, see? And it wasn't too good a port anyhow. We even at one time thought of using Brest, but the transportation problem there would've been terrific and it took quite awhile to free Brest. So, basically we had to make Cherbourg do all it could and get those railroads fixed up as well as we could and work off of the beaches, and then all of a sudden the armies broke loose and ran, and there we were not running. Our plan for the logistics support of the armies in Europe involved the establishment of huge supply depots in the Chartres area. They were all laid on the map, this was assigned to Ordnance, this to Signal Corps, and others to others. This plan never came into being because the armies advanced so fast that we were always running like the dickens to get supplies, current supplies, to them with our transportation never able to build up these depots that we had planned.

So, when they kept that advance up two things happened. Number one was the formation of Redball. I went with General Stratton to visit with Bradley and the situation was explained to us, and how much faster he was going, and what could we do about seeing that he was supplied with essentials. Red Ball Express was established at that meeting. And it involved taking over all the truck transportation that could be gathered and forming truck trains. We even took the trucks away from organizations in England, and as soon as an organization landed in France, it found itself without trucks. That was a great effort, and it kept the armies going quite awhile.

In the meantime, of course, the POL pipeline was being built. It ended south of Paris, but it was not able then to deliver gasoline beyond that point. So we had the problem of delivering gasoline to the forward areas. Gasoline became in short supply! At times we even delivered gasoline by air, but one of the problems was that any time we sent a gasoline truck train up to the armies they kept the truck train to move with them! And when they finished with the jerry cans they threw 'em in the countryside, and we put on a big drive with the civilian population of France once to collect jerry cans. It produced hundreds and

hundreds and thousands of jerry cans that we could start to use all over again. There has been criticism of the Com Z effort in supplying the advancing armies, but it comes right down to this, that the needs were specific, like gasoline and .37 mm shells, or whatever, and those were the things they needed besides food. The amenities had to go by the board as fast as they were moving, and the lines became so long and the trucks so worn out that it finally stalled a bit, and of course, we got a lot of criticism about that. Finally came to the point that the decision was made by General Eisenhower that 75 percent of the supplies would go to the 1st Army, the army that was contiguous to Montgomery. Patton's army would only get 25 percent of the supplies, and that order went out, and the railroad cars and trucks were so manifested. But, General Patton had a very, very smart G-4, and he'd come back to places like Reims with his gang, and they'd change the directions on the cars! And, Com Z was just beat over the head because we weren't fol- lowing the theater commander's orders!

Q: Do you recall the name of that G-4? Patton's G-4?

A: Muller. I think it was [Walter J.] Muller, General Muller. A top-drawer officer.

Q: Well, the criticism has also been made that the Com Z headquarters itself was too large in terms of manpower, and one writer noted that the Headquarters Com Z eventually took up 167 hotels in Paris before it was all over.

A: Well, let me go back one thing. When the Army advanced fast, our way of life had to provide for close coordination with SHAEF, and we had to move fast, too, and General Lee, I'm sure, did not want to move several times. It would've been fruitless for us to move to Chartres, for instance, because by the time we got established and the communications in, they'd have been to the Rhine. So, the decision was made, after, I think, long discussion. The decision was made to move there for several reasons. One was that the Germans had supply depots in the Paris area. I was with a very, very advanced unit. I arrived in Paris, I think, within a day or so after the Germans got out, with a broad staff of Ordnance, Quartermaster,

and so on, and the purpose of my going along was to see that one of those didn't take what he thought was the best facility, but took the one that was assigned to him. And Paris was a railroad hub. Railroads came in and went around Paris and then on. It was the control center of the railroads of France. For transportation this was vital. And whether our staff was too large or not, we were the supply organization. We had the job of receiving requisitions; getting them to the states after they were assembled; getting the supplies ordered, manufactured, and back to us. And in order to do that the services had to relate to the armies and to the divisions. So each one of the services had a lot of officers in Paris. If they hadn't been there they'd have been somewhere else, but I don't think the armies ever wanted to, nor were they capable of, being a supply service in addition to their fighting job. Their job was to win the war. Ours was to help them do it.

Q: Let me throw out a few names at you again, and see how many of these you might recall.

A: All right.

Q: You've already mentioned one, Brigadier General James A. Stratton, theater G-4?

A: Yes.

Q: Have any impressions of him?

A: Dedicated, tough, knew his job. I thought he was a damn good, great G-4, I really do. The problems that I described in the past eventually led to his downfall but he was the victim of a situation he inherited from the early days of the invasion.

Q: Lieutenant General George S. Patton, commanding general of the 3d Army?

A: Well, I've told you all I know about him.

Q: Colonel William Whipple?

A: Bill Whipple and I have always been friends. We were at the World's Fair together, and he's as bright a guy as you'll ever want to meet. He's a

Rhodes scholar. He's bright as the dickens and way beyond me in brain brilliance, if you want to say it that way.

Q: A person I guess you may have met later on, Major General Lucius Clay?

A: Lucius Clay was my mathematics instructor at the military academy, and we maintained a relationship, oh, I guess all during our careers. There was one of the brightest, most pragmatic men I've ever known in my life. You'd start to explain the problem, halfway through he'd give you a solution.

Q: Lieutenant General John C.H. Lee?

A: Yes, I knew him quite well. Very religious man. He believed in the regulations. He was that kind of person.

Q: He had a lot of enemies, didn't he?

A: Oh, yes, mostly because in many cases unfairly he was blamed for not getting the supplies up there, but also he insisted on his position, and Roy Lord, his chief of staff, assisted in that insistence.

Q: Would you go so far as to say Lee was a bit eccentric?

A: Oh, he was quite a purist. He didn't believe in immorality at all. He liked military discipline. The only eccentricity that I ever heard about was that one of the soldiers who was along with him all the time, and had been with him a long time, was a chiropractor, and he wanted General Hawley to accredit him medically, and Hawley couldn't do it. Caused a little argument.

Q: Major General Royal Lord? You just mentioned him.

A: Oh, I know him very well. Yes. Very peculiar guy, ambitious, ambitious as hell--a politician. You see his background before the war, and even during the early part of the war, in Washington, was in the political milieu. But, capable as the dickens. Never had any problems with him at all.

Q: Brigadier General Harry B. Vaughan?

A: Yes, nice guy.

Q: Major General Henry S. Aurand?

A: Yes, he was the chief of Ordnance. Very competent.

Q: He succeeded Clay in Europe, came from the Army Service Forces.

A: Yes. All of Lee's chiefs of Services were top-drawer guys who were dedicated to their jobs. Mostly old-time Army types, but these people I related to quite closely because of the necessity to bring together all the plans into one coordinated plan.

Q: Brigadier General John Ratay?

A: I knew him, but not that well.

Q: Colonel Cleland C. Sibley? He worked in Cherbourg discharge operations.

A: I knew him, yes.

Q: Not well, though?

A: No, his predecessor is the one who started out that job.

Q: Oh, that's the name I don't have! Colonel Claude H. Chorpening?

A: Oh, very well, yes. You know, that's a funny story there. You're going to get to General Pick later on, I guess.

Q: Yes, sir. What can you tell us about Chorpening right now?

A: Only that when [Lewis A.] Pick became Chief of Engineers, he brought me in from Alaska right away to be chief of Civil Works. Up until the time I got there, the chief of Civil Works was a brigadier appointed by the Chief, but the Chief of Staff made a decision that all general officer appointments had to go through the regular appointment process, and no chief would have appointment for a certain specific job in his department. Other departments

had the same thing. So, General Pick was unable to appoint me a brigadier, but he put me on the job anyhow. I related on the Hill to all congressional committees and, as you know, congressional committees like the chief of Civil Works because he's the one who funds their projects. But, I prepared the budget and went up and explained it to all of 'em and defended the budget for two years. And, must've done a good job because one of the congressmen approached the Chief of Staff, and said, "By golly, you've got to appoint him brigadier like he's supposed to be. He was preceded by a brigadier, et cetera." So, the Chief of Staff told Pick to take me out of the job.

Q: Yes, I'm going to want to get back to that a bit later on. How were your relations with Chorpening?

A: Good. Because when I had to leave the job, the Chief put "Chorp" in as chief of Civil Works.

Q: And, you met General Chorpening in Europe?

A: I don't remember that. I don't know what job he had over there.

Q: He took over from Colonel Sibley as the person in charge of the discharge operations at Cherbourg.

A: Well, I should remember his operation, but I don't. I know it got so severe that they sent Lucius Clay over there to work on it.

Q: Right. Do you recall Brigadier General Raymond G. Moses, Army group G-4.

A: I knew Ray Moses before, and saw him many times, and talked to him many times. He was G-4 of--

Q: Army--I don't have which Army group--he was an Army group G-4. Must've been the the 12th.

A: Must've been Bradley's. I guess it was Bradley.

Q: Yes. How about Brigadier General Robert C. Crawford?

A: I knew him quite well, yes. He did a good job, or else he wouldn't have been where he was.

Q: Did you get along well with him?

A: Yes, I never had any problems with him. He had a deputy by the name of Sibley who was with him.

Q: Could that have been the same Sibley who was in charge of Cherbourg discharge operations? Colonel Cleland C. Sibley?

A: No, I don't think that was his name. It was Alden K. Sibley, who eventually became a major general.

Q: I see.

A: Cleland C. was several classes ahead. Let me look him up.

Q: I sometimes wonder what we would do without that West Point Register of Graduates!

A: Well, Cleland is dead. He retired as a brigadier. He was commanding officer of ports ETO, '42 to '46. I really don't remember.

Q: Aside from what you've already mentioned, do you remember any particular problems dealing with transportation in the European theater?

A: Well, no, it was a madhouse. It was a madhouse.

Q: How about the discharge operations at the ports, and in particular, Cherbourg? You evidently went down to Cherbourg and inspected there once, and you complained of misuse of wharfage.

A: Well, they were--see, we were all dedicated in those days to the essential supplies, and they were unloading everything. And, we were using in command a lot of German prisoners in the unloading operation there. The details of my objections I don't remember at this time, but I was disturbed that its full capacity was not being used at that time for the essential things.

Q: Well, what about--well, two things. Were there enough cranes at Cherbourg to unload the material, and were there enough trains coming to Cherbourg to take the material and get it to the troops?

A: We always had trouble with the French railroads. I told you their equipment was antiquated. Their rails were different than ours, so the maintenance had to be learned again. I don't know whether we used French crews. I think the Transportation Corps provided lots of the crews. The cars were small, and it was difficult--the way we worked in the United States, our cars were large and you could put a lot of tonnage on--and their way of life and their communications were different. The railroads were an enormous problem all the way through, and the British had the same problems with those railroads, and the Germans had done some disastrous work on them before we got 'em. Our supply system, for a long, long time, depended on trucks and the POL pipeline.

Q: Do you recall any problems with the cranes?

A: No, I really don't. I don't remember whether there were cranes there like there were in Antwerp or not. In Antwerp there were over 100 cranes along the quays.

Q: What about local procurement? Did you get involved at all with trying to develop local procurement operations?

A: I knew about it. Oh, I remember one time we had a terrible hassle about getting enough tonnage out of the United States to bring seedlings of potatoes over. And pit props. The mines, you know, had been flooded, and we had to get back in those mines, and we had to bring over boatloads of pit props to hold up the shafts and so on in the mines. Anytime anybody had a problem particularly dear to him, or necessary to him, like pit props, that became a major problem.

Q: Did the logistics problems operations improve once Antwerp was captured?

A: Again, and--we received some criticism about that--I think there were 124 cranes on the quays there, and the Germans had not destroyed them. They were there and capable of working. One of the problems with Antwerp was Montgomery's slowness in getting it. The Germans were out in control of the water-way, Walcheren Island, I believe it was out there,

and he wasn't going to attack that until he had all of his ammunition and everything all ready. And, I went to Antwerp several times and was in buildings looking over the operation, and shells were landing in Antwerp from the Germans out there in Walcheren Island and other places, but when we got it, our plans were quite complete as to its operation, and there was no problem once we got the mines out of the river. But, again, transportation--and the first thing you know we had all of those warehouses on the docks chuckablock with stuff, waiting for a way to get it out through Liege down to the armies! And there was a lot of criticism as we were using it as a depot, which we were! We wanted to get the ships unloaded because Washington wanted the ships back, and moving the stuff out was a hell of a problem. I don't know how many times I went to Antwerp, but many times. Used to take a train out of Paris.

Q: But, once it was secure, I presume it expedited the whole--

A: Oh, yes! It did a good job of unloading, and in a very important place, tactical place, too, because it was right there near the armies, and Cherbourg was a long way away from the armies.

Q: Did you finally get any particular responsibilities, any particular geographical responsibilities, while working in Com Z?

A: Theater wide?

Q: Theater wide.

A: We had five sections of France where we had officers in charge of logistics and supply, and I related to them. I didn't have any command authority except I was on the staffs of General Stratton and General Lee, and of course, that gave me some sort of command authority. You passed orders on through them and so on and so forth.

Q: I see.

A: One of the most important plans we ever prepared in my section had to do with the dissolution of the theater. It was obvious we were going to win the

war, and plans were made to take troops from Europe to Japan, and maybe some were sent that way, I don't know. But, we had an enormous wealth of equipment, tanks, supplies, and all that sort of stuff. And, we developed a plan whereby the tactical organizations would go through large establishments that we established geographically and be divested of their equipment, which then could be put into transferable condition to go somewhere else. It's my understanding that General Lord, when the south France organization moved in on Lee and replaced a lot of the people, took over that job himself because he was finding himself not compatible with the new command that was moving in from the south of France, the new deputy under Lee. They never relieved Lee, but they put a deputy in there, and they brought in General [Morris W.] Gilland as the replacement for Jimmy Stratton. But, the other thing we established were these big camps like Philip Morris and Lucky Strike, the places where the troops were going to go and be reembarked back to the United States. We established all of those. So we worked both sides of the game.

Q: How long were you in Europe then?

A: I went to England in November of '43, and I think I left in July of '45.

Q: So you were involved also in supplying troops right through to the end of the war?

A: Yes.

Q: Were there any significant logistics problems once the troops got beyond the Rhine?

A: Really not, no. The place was loaded. I don't know whether we ever cleared up that mess behind Omaha Beach or not. I imagine some of that stuff was there at the end of the war, purely because it wasn't in an inventorying catalogue.

Q: Well, sounds as though there were some problems in World War II that we didn't solve in Vietnam either.

A: Supply's a terrible problem, and the supply in World War II was a lot simpler than Vietnam because you've started to get into these highly technical

devices, and I don't know if there was a helicopter in Europe! I don't suppose there was. And, there were no computers, I can tell you that. My particular headquarters, I think I had three English secretaries and one WAC. Don Neill was a regular Army officer and assistant G-4. He had charge of another aspect, Vic Rapport was Jimmy Stratton's right hand--he was his deputy. And Neil Drake was in charge of transportation in Jimmy Stratton's organization. Freeman Burford was our POL man.

Q: I see. In July 1945 you were named Kansas City District Engineer?

A: Yes. Oh, before that, in France, long after everybody else, I got the jaundice, and I was in the hospital, the American hospital there, for at least two months. And, that's when this change from the south took place, and Jimmy, in the meantime, had left. And, I got out of the hospital practically on receipt of orders to go back to the states.

Q: I see. I guess you were ready to go back to the states by that time, too?

A: Yes, I sort of don't like completed things. I like things that are going on.

Q: Had your wife and children come over and been with you?

A: No.

Q: Not at all?

A: Oh, no.

Q: So, you hadn't seen them for two years?

A: Except for that time when I came back on the psychological warfare thing, which was only a month-and-a-half after I got over there.

Q: Well, that must've been a bit difficult.

A: Yeah. Well, they stayed with her mother.

Q: I see.